

Development Information Package



County of Northern Lights
January 2018





Engineering
and Land Services

ISL Engineering and Land Services Ltd. is an award-winning full-service consulting firm dedicated to working with all levels of government and the private sector to deliver planning and design solutions for transportation, water, and land projects. ISL has provided municipal advisory services to the County since 1999.

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1.0 Purpose

1.1 Legislative Authority for Planning in the County

In Canada, the Constitution divides all legal authority between two orders of government, the federal and provincial. The respective roles of each level of government is outlined in the *Constitution Act*. The County derives its authority from the provincial government, through legislation delegating certain powers to municipalities.

Part 17 of the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) contains the significant provisions relating to land use planning and the regulation of subdivision and development of land in Alberta. When evaluating a development application or appeal, the *MGA* enables a Development Authority and Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB) to consider how a development contributes to the use of land, land suitability and soil characteristics, impacts on the physical environment, public interest, and compatibility to existing development.

Since 2009, the *Alberta Land Stewardship Act* (ALSA) has been used to implement Alberta's Land-use Framework. The Land-use Framework was released in December 2008 and sets out seven land-use regions in the province, and calls for a regional plan for each region. The County is within the Lower Peace region. The province has yet to initiate a regional planning process for this area. The Land-use Framework establishes key provincial land-use objectives and responsibilities of the Stewardship Minister, Stewardship Commissioner, Land-use Secretariat and Regional Advisory Councils. Where a decision by a Development Authority is inconsistent with an adopted regional plan under the *ALSA*, the regional plan prevails. *ALSA* imposes additional considerations and obligations on the planning and development

authorities when rendering a decision. The Development Authority and the SDAB should interpret statutory plans and the Land Use Bylaw (LUB) for the County in a manner that is consistent with the regional plan. With the adoption of the *ALSA*, the planning framework and legislative authority for planning and development in Alberta is outlined in **Figure 1**.

1.2 Municipal Responsibility

The *MGA* assigns the responsibility and legislative authority for planning municipalities in Alberta under Part 17 of the *Act*. The *MGA* establishes the authority for municipalities to develop, adopt, and review all plans and bylaws that integrate legislation and planning principles to guide Development Authorities in making decisions on applications. It is the responsibility of municipal councils to adopt or amend LUBs or statutory plans. The SDAB does not have the legal authority to decide on the legal status of a municipal bylaw adopting a statutory plan or LUB. In addition to the *MGA*, the *Subdivision and Development Regulation* outlines various procedures and guidelines for development, agency referrals, and decision-making processes on development permit applications in the County of Northern Lights.

Municipal Government Act & Regional Plans

- Enables the creation of statutory plans and development policies
- Integrated economic, environmental and social outcomes
- Objectives and goals (quantitative, measurable targets)
- Strategies and actions (both regulatory and non-regulatory)



Intermunicipal Development Plan

- Future Land Use
- Transportation and services
- Coordination with neighbours



Municipal Development Plan

- Establishes the long-term vision, goals, and objectives for the County as a whole
- Divides the County into policy areas



Area Structure Plans

- Identified the specific pattern of land use and servicing for new communities or developing areas.



Land Use Bylaws

- Divides the County into districts
- Permitted and discretionary uses in each district
- Sets standards for development/permitting/subdivision design



Development

- Review development permit applications within the County
- Accepts, processes, and issues development decisions and recommendations

Figure 1: Legislative Authority

2.0 Development Authority and Control

2.1 Development Authority

The *MGA* requires the County of Northern Lights to establish a Development Authority to exercise powers and duties on behalf of the County. The Development Authority is responsible for accepting, processing, and deciding on development permit applications in accordance with *ALSA* regional plans, the *MGA*, County statutory plans, Land Use Bylaw (LUB), and other current enactments and regulations. A Development Authority may include one or more designated officers, a municipal planning commission, or any other person or organization. The County of Northern Lights assigns decision-making for discretionary uses to County Council.

2.2 Common Types of Development

Common types of development permits, as defined by the *MGA*, include:

- creating an excavation or stockpile;
- building, adding to, replacing, or repairing a building, as well as constructing or placing any of them on, in or under land;
- changing the use of land or a building, or making changes to the land or building that are likely to change their use; or
- making changes to land or a building that are likely to change their intensity or use (see **Figure 2**).

A developer may apply for a development permit only after acquiring any necessary subdivision approval, statutory or land use bylaw amendments.

2.3 Who Can Apply for a Development Permit

Only the registered owner(s) of the land can apply for a development permit on their land. However, as specified under the *Subdivision and Development Regulation*, the registered owner(s) can appoint an authorized person or agent to apply for a permit on their behalf. In the County of Northern Lights, other professionals or consultants can assist landowners to act on their behalf when undertaking an application on their own.

2.4 How to Apply for Development Approval

The first step in completing a development permit application for the County of Northern Lights is meeting with County administration and filling out an application form, which is available for pick-up at the County office or download from the County website. Evaluation of a development permit application will not begin until a complete application is received by the Development Authority. The applicant will be notified within 20 days on the completeness of the application.

Be sure to ask the County of Northern Lights for a copy of any relevant planning documents, including but not limited to the Municipal Development Plan (MDP), Area Structure Plans (ASPs), Area Concept Plans (ACPs), Outline Plans (OPs), and Land Use Bylaw (LUB). These documents may permit or prohibit the proposed use of land subject to the development.

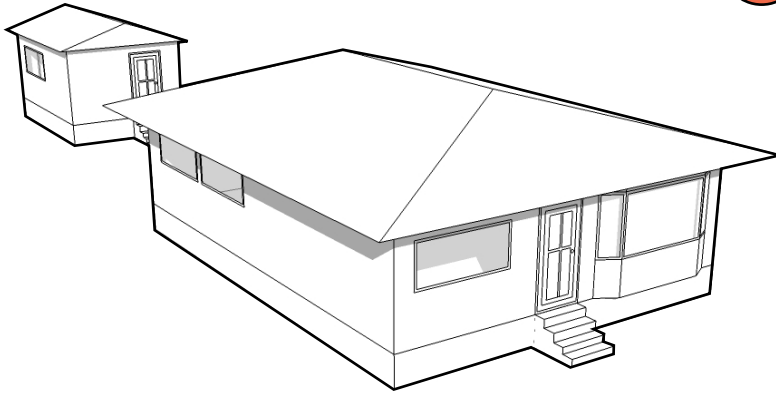
The County of Northern Lights Planning and Development Department will require the following information to start an application: name, address, phone number of the applicant or agent; the legal description of the land, physical characteristics of the land, indication of water and sanitary services, and development information. In addition, the



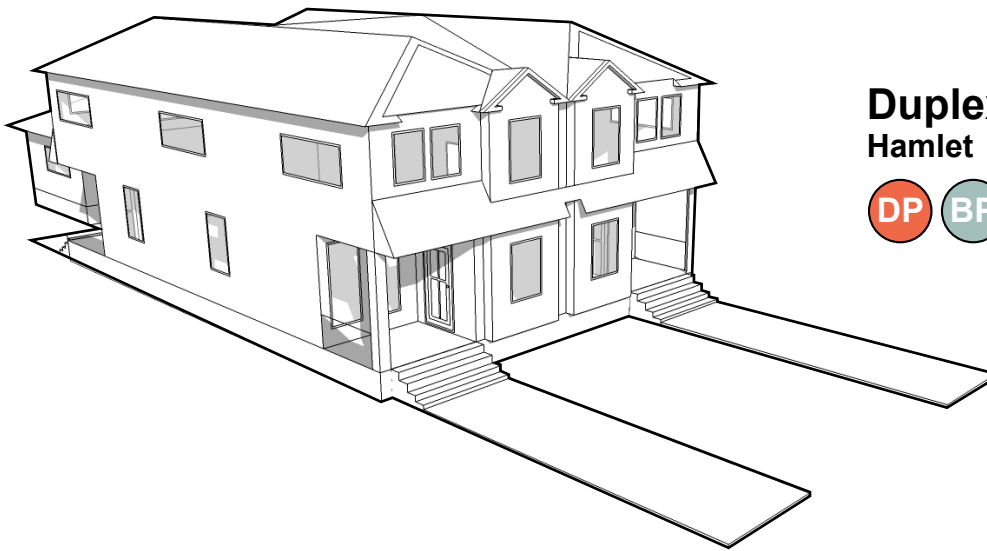
Development
Permit(s)
Required



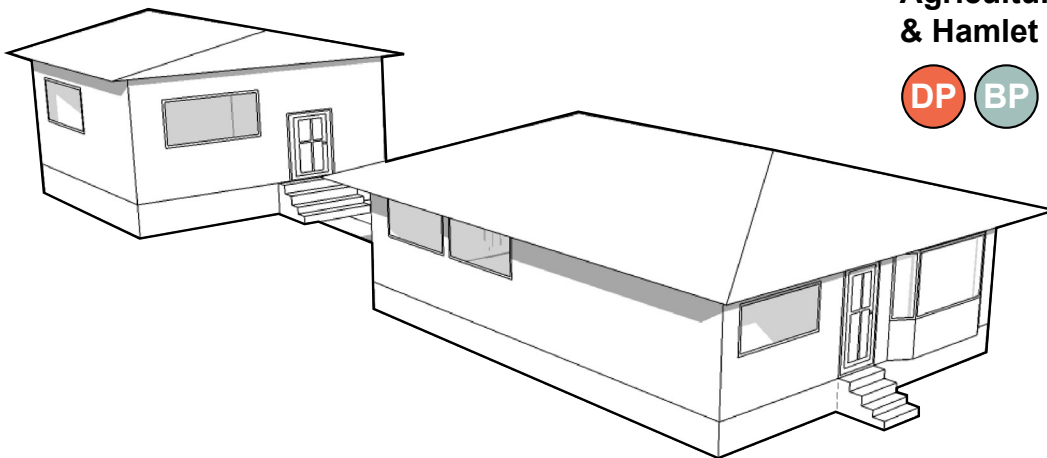
Building
Permit(s)
Required



**Single Detached Dwelling
+ Accessory Building**
Country Residential Development



Duplex + Row Housing
Hamlet Development



**Single Detached Dwelling
+ Garden Suite**
Agricultural, Country Residential,
& Hamlet Development



Figure 2: Common Development Typology

County will require a development site plan outlining the proposed development (proposed and existing structures, property lines, creeks/ravines, parking and vehicle access, building plans, etc.), and the required application fees.

Contact the County of Northern Lights Planning and Development Department to arrange a pre-application meeting to discuss any issues or questions that may be related to a proposed application.

2.5 When More Information is Required

Additional information may be required to evaluate the development permit application, including but not limited to soil tests, hydrological analysis, geotechnical reports, site topography and drainage patterns.

The results of any geotechnical or engineering studies are required to determine soil suitability, slope stability, flood risk, or other related matters.

An important consideration for any development in the County of Northern Lights is the source of potable water and the method of sewage disposal. The applicant/owner will be required to install a sewage disposal system which complies with the Alberta Private Sewage Systems Standard of Practice. The County of Northern Lights has additional policies for development within the Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer (see **Figure 3**). Additional information is required to ensure open discharge of effluent or other liquid waste does not enter the Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer, and a sealed holding tank or other form of closed loop sewage disposal may be required.

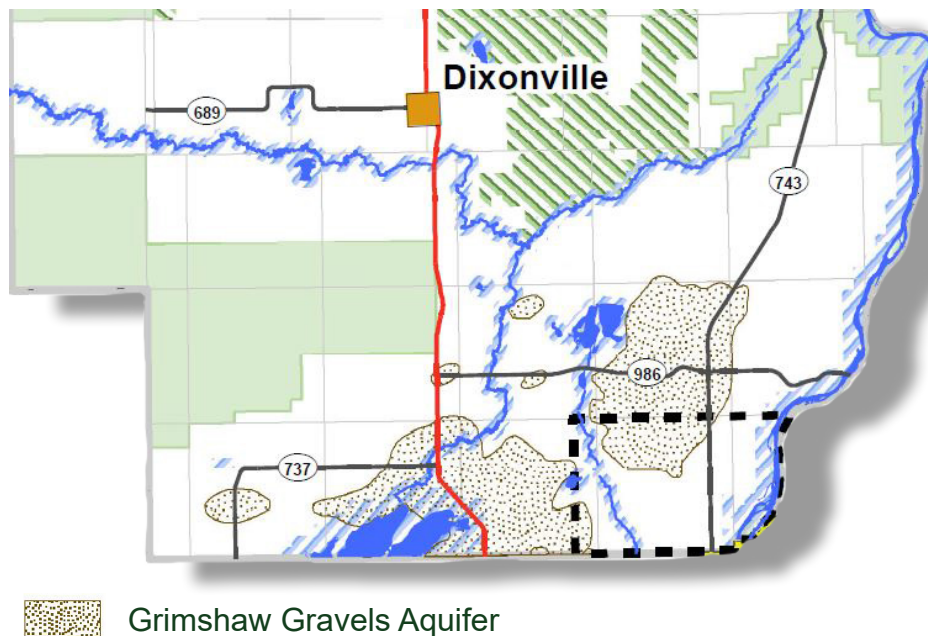


Figure 3: Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer

A photograph of a dirt path winding through a forest. The trees are covered in vibrant yellow autumn foliage, and the path is scattered with fallen leaves. The scene is captured in a warm, golden light, creating a serene and inviting atmosphere.

3.0 Minimum Application Requirements

3.1 Complete Application

In the County of Northern Lights, applications are not considered complete until the Development Authority receives all required information. The landowner or agent authorized by the owner of land will be notified by the County on the completeness of their application once received and applicable fees have been processed (refer to the County's Schedule of Fees Bylaw). The applicant must submit the following minimum application requirements:

- ☒ Site plan in duplicate showing the legal description and front, rear, and side yards, and any provision of off-street loading and vehicle parking and access and egress to the site (see **Figure 4**);
- ☒ A floor plan and elevations and sections in duplicate, where applicable at the discretion of the Development Officer;
- ☒ Up-to-date copy of the land title;
- ☒ A statement of uses;
- ☒ A statement of ownership of land and interest of the applicant therein;
- ☒ the estimated commencement and completion dates;
- ☒ the estimated cost of the project or contract price;
- ☒ the extent of existing treed areas and an indication of the trees which are proposed for removal;
- ☒ non-refundable processing fee; and
- ☒ such additional information as the Development Officer may require to evaluate the application, including but not limited to soil tests, hydrological analysis, geotechnical reports, site topography and drainage patterns.

The image shows three overlapping forms from the County of Northern Lights. The top form is the 'DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION' for 'An Agricultural Based Community'. It includes contact information for the County and a section for 'APPLICANT INFORMATION' with fields for name, address, and phone. The middle form is a 'DEVELOPMENT SITE PLAN' which includes a diagram of a quarter section of land with a proposed development. The bottom form is 'ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION' which includes sections for 'TYPE OF DOMESTIC WATER SUPPLY' and 'TYPE OF DOMESTIC/COMMERCIAL SEWAGE DISPOSAL', both with checkboxes for various options like 'DUGOUT', 'WELL', 'CISTERN', etc.

3.2 Additional Information Requirements

Additional information may be required for development approval and will be dependent upon the complexity of the proposed development. Often, the greater the construction cost and the type of proposed development (residential, commercial/industrial), the more detail will be required. When, in the opinion of the Development Authority, sufficient details have not been included with a development permit application, it may be returned to the applicant for further details. The application so returned shall be deemed not to have been in its complete and final form until all the required details have been submitted.

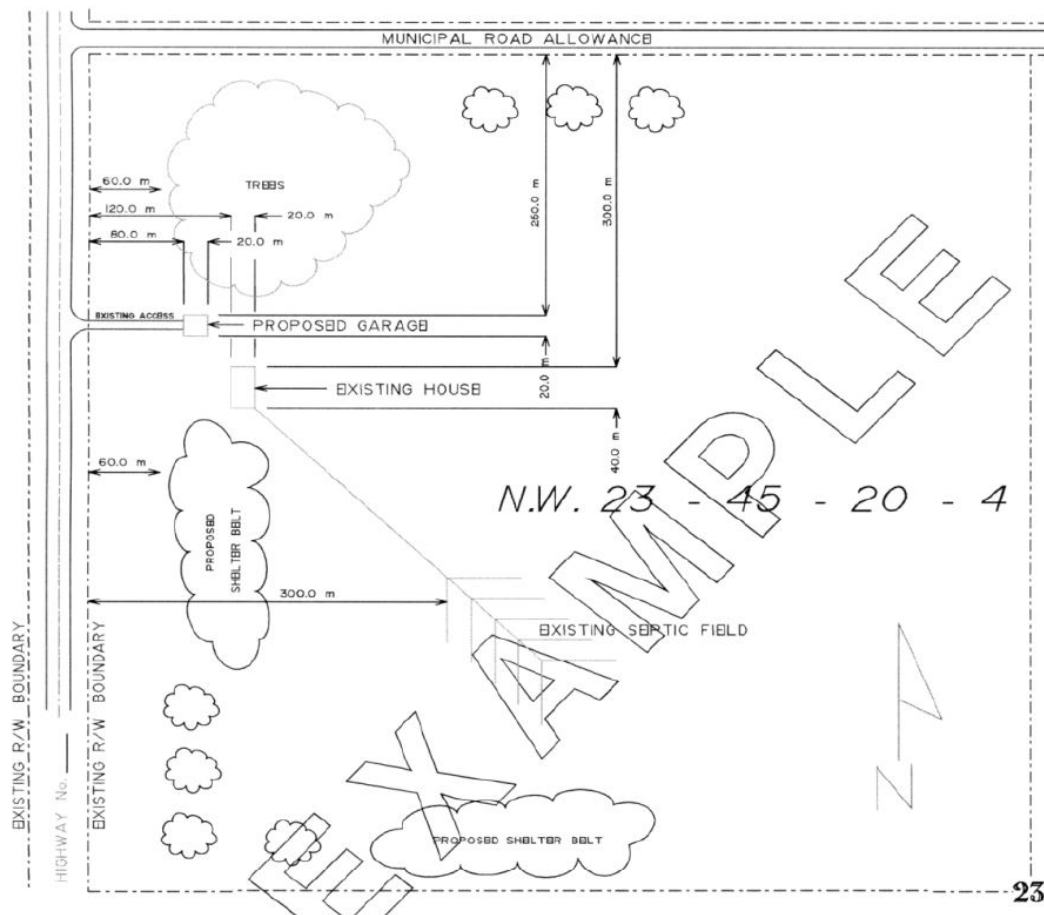


Figure 4: Example of a Development Site Plan

An aerial photograph of a vast, dense forest. The trees are mostly deciduous with green foliage. In the bottom left corner, there is a large, cleared area, possibly a logging site or a natural clearing, showing bare earth and some sparse vegetation. The overall tone of the image is warm, with a reddish-orange overlay.

4.0 Planning Hierarchy

Statutory plans require three readings and a public hearing before they can be adopted, and are legally binding planning documents. Non-statutory plans are bylaws passed by resolution to encourage and guide development or growth in particular areas in the County.

4.3 Municipal Development Plan (MDP)

Statutory limitations apply when subdividing or developing land, but exceptions exist under the *MGA* for roads, wells, batteries, pipelines, and Crown Lands. The County of Northern Lights reviews development applications to ensure applicable provincial regulations and municipal bylaws are in compliance. Refer to **Figure 5** to review the planning hierarchy in the County of Northern Lights.

4.1 Municipal Government Act (MGA)

The *MGA* enables the creation of statutory plans and provides the legislation to allow municipal councils to establish development policies for all or part of the County. Legislation provides for four types of statutory plans, including: 1) Intermunicipal Development Plans (IDPs); 2) Municipal Development Plans (MDPs); 3) Area Structure Plans (ASPs); and 4) Area Redevelopment Plans (ARPs). The creation of statutory plans must be in alignment with regional plans, if approved.

The County of Northern Lights MDP was adopted by bylaw in 2010. The MDP establishes the long-term vision, goals, and objectives for the County as a whole. The MDP outlines areas that must be addressed by the County, including:

- Future land uses;
- Proposals for future development;
- Future growth patterns and infrastructure adjacent to other municipalities;
- Provision of transportation systems;
- Municipal servicing and facilities;
- Policies compatible with the *Subdivision and Development Regulation* and sour gas facilities;
- Policies for the provision of municipal, school, or community service reserves, and the allocation of those reserves in consultation with school authorities; and
- Policies respecting the protection of agricultural operations.

4.2 Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP)

The County of Northern Lights have IDPs for those areas of land that share common boundaries with its surrounding municipalities. An IDP must provide for future land use, proposals for development, transportation systems, intermunicipal programs, and any other matters necessary. If a proposed development is within an IDP plan area, development approvals

4.4 Area Structure Plans (ASPs)

The County of Northern Lights may adopt ASPs to plan for future development for certain areas in greater detail or for redevelopment through Area Redevelopment Plans (ARPs). The creation of ASPs are used to address concept design and detailed development issues including infrastructure needs, types of development, sequence of development and proposed densities.

4.5 Area Concept Plans (ACPs)

The County of Northern Lights uses an ACP, a non-statutory land use plan, to provide a comprehensive planning policy framework and generalized future land use concept to help in the preparation of ASPs. The County has one ACP, the Weberville Highway Corridor ACP, which describes how development will occur along the highway. Although ACPs are not statutory documents, these plans provide guidance to County Administration and Council in reviewing future zoning, subdivision and development proposals.

4.6 Outline Plans (OPs)

In addition to ACPs, the County of Northern Lights has also used other non-statutory plans, such as OPs when beginning to consider land use plans and detailed transportation and servicing concepts for future subdivision and development of land. The OP is similar to an ASP, but typically focuses on a smaller area within an approved ASP and gives a higher level of detail for development within those boundaries. The County has two outline plans, including the Weberville Country Estates OP and Westview Country Estates OP.

4.7 Land Use Bylaw (LUBs)

In the County, a LUB regulates the use and development of land. All municipalities are required to adopt a LUB under the *MGA*, but they are not statutory plans. The LUB divides the County into land use districts, which set permitted and discretionary uses for each type of development. The LUB establishes site provisions in each district, and provides a system to issue development and subdivision approvals.

The purpose of the LUB is to control the use and development of land and buildings within the County. All development within the County requires a valid development permit unless such development is officially exempted in the LUB and *MGA*.

County of Northern Lights Land Use Planning Framework

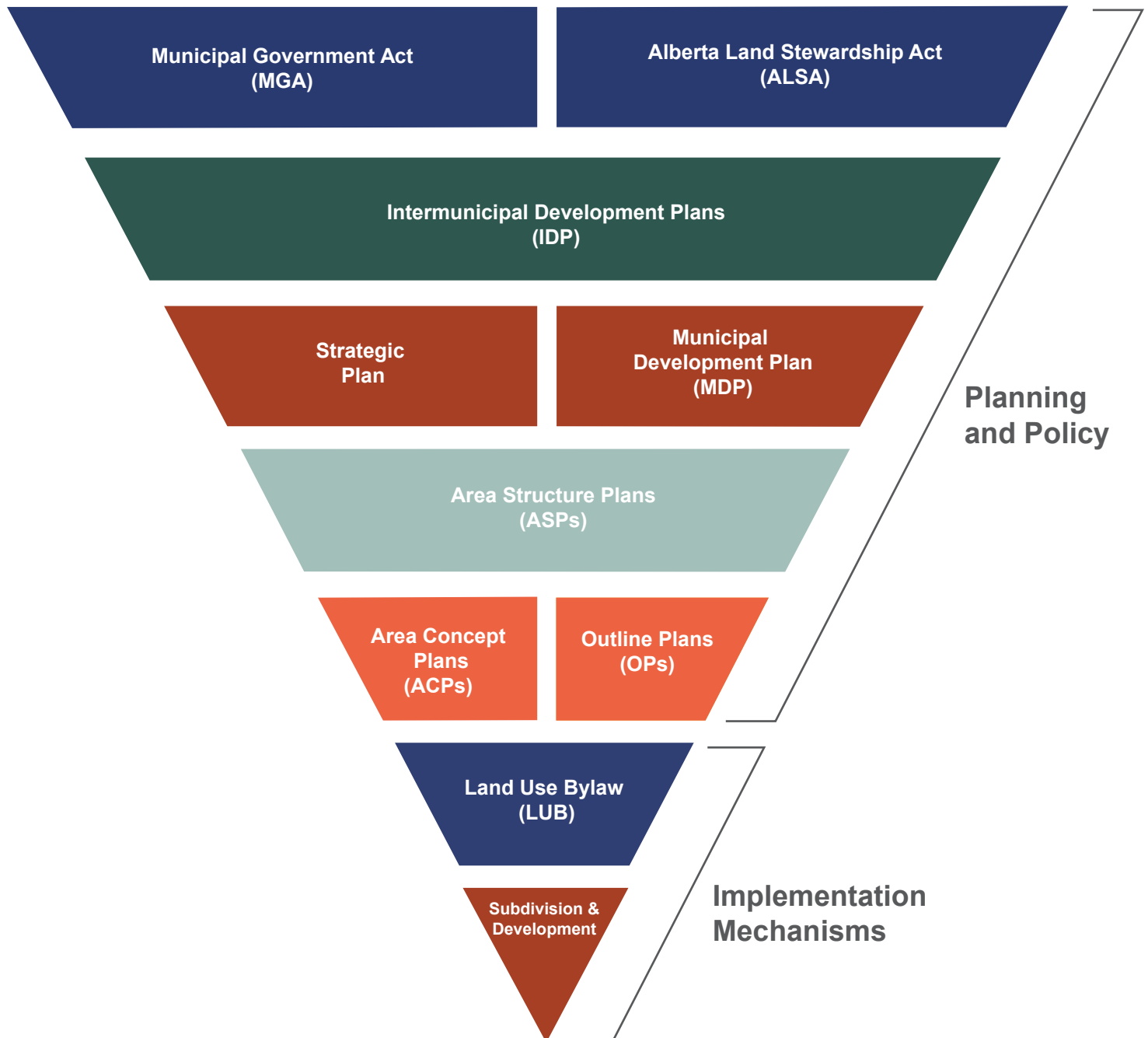


Figure 5: Planning Hierarchy

A photograph of a forest with many bare, tall trees. The sun is low in the sky, creating a warm, golden glow that filters through the branches. A semi-transparent, rounded rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the title text.

5.0 The Development Process

In the County of Northern Lights, when a development proposal is received, the development permit application must be submitted to the County's Development Authority. The development proposal will be reviewed by the County to ensure compliance with the *ALSA*, *MGA*, statutory plans, LUB, and *Subdivision and Development Regulation* (see **Figure 6**).

5.1 Application

After any required subdivision has been approved or statutory plan or LUB amendments passed, a landowner of a parcel of land or a person authorized by the owner can apply for a development permit by submitting a complete application and applicable fees to the County's Planning and Development Department. Applications will be reviewed for completeness by the County within 20 days, and any additional information that may be necessary in order for the Development Authority to issue a decision. The applicant will be notified on whether the application is incomplete.

5.2 Requesting a Variance

In cases where a variance is required relating to separation distance reductions, equipment and existing sewage treatment systems, an application can be made to Alberta Municipal Affairs or a variance for an existing system design can be issued by the Safety Codes Agency operating in the County. Refer to Section 8.0 for more information on Safety Code Permits.

5.3 Acceptance

Once a complete application has been received by the County, the Development Authority will notify the applicant that the application has been deemed complete. The date of acceptance will begin the development approval process and

provide a date for determining the timelines for the County to issue a decision. Under the *MGA* and LUB, a Development Authority must decide on an application within 40 days from the date the application was deemed to be complete.

5.4 Agency Referrals

The Development Authority may refer a copy of the development permit application to any agency in order to receive comment and advice. The Development Authority may refer development permit applications for "discretionary uses" to adjacent landowners for review to offer an opportunity to submit written feedback on the development proposal.

5.5 Technical Review

After receiving the complete development permit application, County staff and ISL Engineering and Land Services Ltd. will assess the application based on legislative and planning considerations. Staff and ISL Engineering and Land Services Ltd. review additional information that is necessary to make an assessment, which may include previous development activity, compatibility with surrounding uses, standards for the district, and any special considerations such as soil tests, hydrological analysis, geotechnical reports, site topography and drainage pattern. The statutory plan and bylaw sections used to analyze the application and the recommendations and/or decisions will be completed within a development report and recommendation.

5.6 Decision/Approval and Conditions

An application for a permitted use that complies with the standards for a district must be approved, with or without conditions by the Development Authority. Applications for discretionary uses or

applications for permitted uses that do not meet all the LUB standards set out for a district may be approved, conditionally approved, or refused. Applications for uses that are neither permitted nor discretionary within a district, Council may determine that such a use is similar in character and purpose to a use listed under that district and may issue a development permit.

The Development Authority must make a decision on a development permit within 40 days unless the applicant and Development Authority agree to extend the time, and notify affected persons of the decision in accordance with the LUB. An applicant may consider a failure to make a decision after 40 days a deemed refusal.

A notice of decision will be mailed to the applicant or authorized agent, and all adjacent property owners and any other parties deemed affected with stated reasons for the decision. If no appeals are received, a development permit comes into effect 14 days after its issuance. A development permit lapses and is automatically void if the development authorized is not commenced within 12 months from the date of issuing the permit or within such a longer period not exceeding 3 months as may be granted by the Development Authority.

5.7 Agreements

The County of Northern Lights may require a developer to enter into a development agreement as a condition of a development permit. In accordance with the *MGA*, a development agreement may require the applicant to:

- Construct or pay for a road or pedestrian walkway system;
- Install or pay for the installation of public utilities (other than telecommunications);
- Construct or pay for off-street parking or

other parking facilities, and loading or unloading facilities;

- Pay an off-site levy or redevelopment levy; and
- Give a security to ensure performance of the terms of the development agreement.

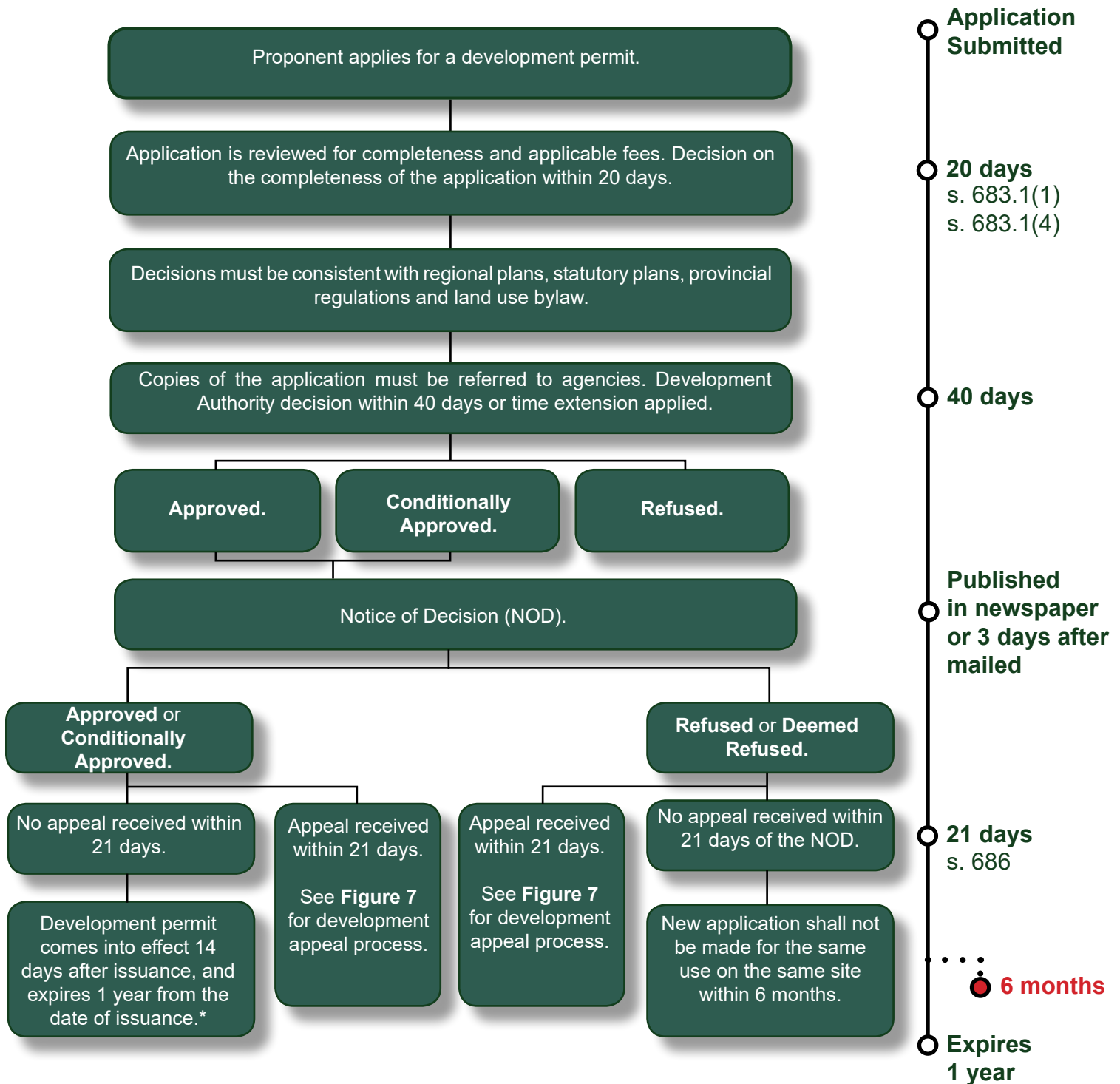
5.8 Appeals

The Development Authority's decision or deemed refusal may be appealed by the applicant or by other affected persons by filing a notice of appeal with the SDAB within 21 days of receiving the notice of decision. In the County of Northern Lights, issuance of the notice of decision is deemed to have been given on the day when the notice of decision has been published in the newspaper or 3 days after the notice of decision has been stamped and mailed to the applicant and adjacent landowners or affected persons. The SDAB must hold a hearing within 30 days of receiving the notice of appeal and must give a written decision within 15 days of concluding the hearing. The SDAB's decision may be further appealed to the Court of Appeal on a question of law or jurisdiction.

5.9 Re-Application

When a development permit application has been refused pursuant to the LUB or after appeal, the submission of another application for a development permit on the same parcel of land for the same or similar use shall not be accepted by the Development Authority until 6 months after the date of the refusal.

Development Process



* A development permit lapses and is automatically void if the development authorized is not commenced within twelve (12) months from the date of issuing the permit or within such longer period not exceeding three (3) months as may be granted by the Development Authority.

Figure 6: Development Process

6.0 SDAB Appeals

6.1 Roles and Responsibilities of SDAB Members

In the County of Northern Lights, the SDAB members must make decisions on development appeals based on impartial and fair evidence presented to the board during the hearing. The role of any SDAB member is to participate in the hearing process and to ensure decisions on development applications are made in a timely manner.

The SDAB must hold a hearing within 30 days of the notice of appeal, and a decision must be given in writing within 15 days of concluding the hearing. The operation of the SDAB is established through the *MGA*. The SDAB appeal process involves SDAB members, a Chairperson, and a SDAB Secretary.

6.1.1 Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB)

Before a hearing, the SDAB members must be ready to review the development appeal and be informed about their legislative and quasi-judicial responsibilities, which involves being familiar with the relevant plans and bylaws (*ALSA*, *MGA*, *MDP*, *ASPs*, *ACPs*, *OPs*, *LUB*) in the County. At the hearing, SDAB members must yield the operation of the hearing to the SDAB Chairperson and may ask questions during the hearing only with permission of the Chairperson. SDAB members should follow fair procedures and act in accordance with the rules of natural justice, and determine if their sitting at the hearing is appropriate and not a conflict of interest. A key task of SDAB members is to ask questions of the appellant to determine the findings of fact or to clarify information provided in order to base their decision on the evidence

presented in the hearing. SDAB members will contribute to the written decision and ensure that written reasons are provided.

6.1.2 SDAB Chairperson

The SDAB Chairperson opens the hearing, provides direction to the people attending the hearing to help them understand the process and how their input may be recognized. The Chairperson has control over the hearing and can call for breaks during the hearing, if necessary. Questions and requests are referred through the SDAB Chairperson, and ensures that members of the SDAB have adequate facts to develop the reasons for their decisions and to formulate the decision on the development appeal.

6.1.3 SDAB Secretary/Clerk

The SDAB Secretary/Clerk performs a variety of functions but mainly acts as an Administrator or Executive Officer to ensure the appeal has been properly filed (within 21 days of decision), and to ensure that appropriate people are informed of appeal (including the appellant, affected persons, and agencies identified in the *Subdivision and Development Regulation*). The SDAB Secretary also ensures that all advertisements and notices comply with the *MGA* and have been made at least 5 days prior to the hearing.

6.2 Roles and Responsibilities of Persons at a Hearing

The County of Northern Lights will assist residents in gaining information about decisions, and how to make a submission to the SDAB.

6.2.1 Applying for an Appeal to a Development Decision

The appellant's role is to provide submissions and evidence on the grounds for the appeal of the approving authority's decision within 21 days from the date of notice of decision. The County of Northern Lights and the SDAB Chairperson will be able to provide guidance to an appellant in order to submit the appeal letter and give reasons for the appeal. The appellant should be able to elaborate on the reason for the appeal during the hearing, and provide examples and use illustrations to assist the SDAB members to understand the problem with the original decision.

6.2.2 Responding to an Appeal to a Development Decision

The Development Authority of the County, or a representative of the approving authority will describe the steps that the Authority followed in making their decision. The respondent's case may also be supported by evidence presented in writing or by a witness.

6.2.3 Applicant Appeals to a Development Application

The applicant is the person or landowner whose application was considered, and on which

a decision was rendered by the Development Authority. If the Development Authority refused a development proposal application or approved the application with conditions, the applicant can appeal the decision or conditions that the applicant disagrees with.

6.2.4 Affected Persons

An appeal may be launched by the applicant or by other persons by filing a notice of appeal with the SDAB within 21 days of receiving a notice of decision or of the deemed refusal. Any person affected can lodge an appeal including:

- The person applying for the permit; or
- Any person who is affected by the development permit.

6.2.5 Agent

An applicant, appellant, or an affected person may bring advisors or specialists to speak for them, or to assist in providing information to the SDAB. Agents might include lawyers, consultants, or other people who will provide different information to the SDAB to assist with reasons for the appeal.

7.0 The Development Appeal Process

7.1 Development Appeals

In the County of Northern Lights, the Development Authority's decision or deemed refusal may be appealed to the SDAB, which may be launched by the applicant, a provincial department that was referred the application, or a school authority. The notice of appeal must be filed with the SDAB within 21 days of receipt of the notice of decision or deemed refusal from the Development Authority.

the Court of Appeal on a question of law or jurisdiction. A Development Authority shall refuse to accept a new application for the same use on the same parcel within 6 months of the date of the Development Authority's refusal.

7.2 Appeal Timelines

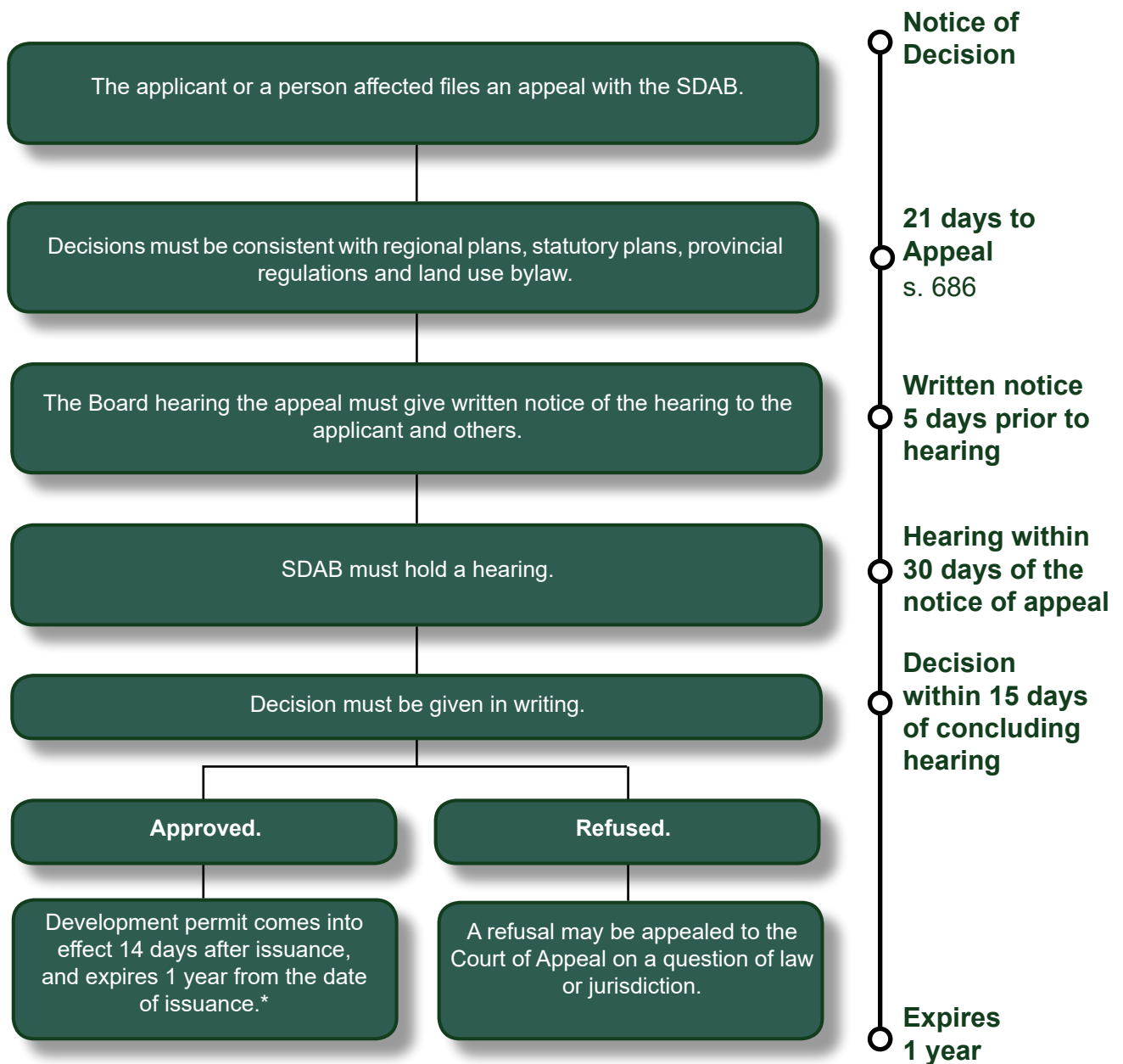
The development appeal process is initiated within 21 days after the receipt of the notice of decision or deemed refusal. If an appeal is received during the appeal period, or 40 days after the application date if no decision has been made, the SDAB will review the appeal during a hearing within 30 days of the notice of appeal. The SDAB hearing must give written notice of the hearing to the applicant and others at least 5 days prior to the hearing date. A decision must be given in writing within 15 days of concluding the hearing (see **Figure 7**).

7.3 Decisions

A notice of the decision will be mailed to the applicant or authorized agent, and all adjacent property owners and any other parties deemed affected with stated reasons for the decision. In the County of Northern Lights, a development permit comes into effect 14 days after its issuance. A development permit lapses and is automatically void if the development authorized is not commenced within 12 months from the date of issuing the permit or within such a longer period not exceeding 3 months as may be granted by the Development Authority.

If the decision or conditions of approval are refused, the approval may be appealed to

Development Appeal Process



* A development permit lapses and is automatically void if the development authorized is not commenced within twelve (12) months from the date of issuing the permit or within such longer period not exceeding three (3) months as may be granted by the Development Authority.

Figure 7: Development Appeal Process



8.0 Safety Code Permits

8.1 What type of work requires a Permit

In the County of Northern Lights, most developments require a building permit after receiving an approved development permit. The building permit ensures that any proposed structures or plans conform to the Alberta Building Code safety standards. The *Safety Codes Act* requires that all contractors and homeowners in Alberta obtain permits before working on buildings covered by the Alberta Building Code, Canadian Electrical Code, Alberta Gas Code, or the Alberta Plumbing Code.

8.2 Where to get a Permit

Safety permits are available from agencies who provide inspection services on behalf of the province through the Alberta Safety Codes Authority (ASCA) and are accredited to administer the *Safety Codes Act* in non-accredited municipalities. If you have further questions, please call the Safety Services branch of Municipal Affairs at 1-866-421-6929; or email safety.services@gov.ab.ca

8.3 Advantages from obtaining a Permit

If permits are not obtained and the work is not properly installed, fixing the incorrect work can mean extra costs in the future. If a problem should arise (like an accident because of improper wiring or gas fitting, or problems with structural integrity) and the proper permits were not in place, your insurance company may not cover the accident.

8.4 Permit Timelines

In accordance with the *Safety Codes Act* and Permit Regulation, as amended, a permit is non-transferable and the term of the permit expires if your project:

- Is not started within 90 days from the date of the permit issuance;
- Is suspended or abandoned for 120 days; or
- Is for seasonal use residences and suspended or abandoned for 240 days after starting.

If the term of this permit has not expired, a permit issuer may, in writing, and on the request of the permit holder, extend the permit for additional fixed periods of time that the permit issuer considers appropriate.

8.5 Landowner Responsibility

The landowner must ensure that all permits have been obtained. If the landowner hires a contractor, the contractor must apply for the required permits to begin work. The contractor takes on any liabilities associated with their work, and a landowner can request a copy of the issued permit from their contractor. The County of Northern Lights recommends that landowners who hire contractors or sub-contractors keep copies of the issued permit(s), inspection reports, and permit services reports.

8.6 Home Warranty

As of February 1, 2014, every new home built in Alberta is protected under warranty as part of Alberta's *New Home Buyer Protection Act*. New homes (single-detached family homes, duplexes, multi-family homes, condominiums, manufactured homes, recreational properties) include, at minimum, a warranty for:

- One year labour and materials;
- Two years for defects in labour and materials related to delivery and distribution systems;
- Five years building envelope protection, with a requirement for the warranty provider to offer the consumer the option to purchase additional years of coverage; and
- 10 years coverage for major structural components.

9.0 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Where can I find a Certified Professional to obtain safety code permits (electrical, plumbing, gas and PSDS)?**

For further information on contacting an accredited Safety Codes Officer or agency, please call the Safety Services branch of Municipal Affairs at 1-866-421-6929; or email safety.services@gov.ab.ca

For more information regarding the construction and operation of pressure equipment, contact the Alberta Boilers Safety Association. Contact the Alberta Elevating Devices and Amusement Safety Association regarding the construction of elevators, ski-lifts and amusement rides. Information on permits, management of, and decommissioning petroleum tanks can be found at the Petroleum Tank Management Association of Alberta.

2. **Who should I contact about Development Permit inquiries?**

Development permits are available through the County of Northern Lights Planning and Development Department. Before making a development permit application to the County of Northern Lights, please read this information package. Anyone who wants to develop a property must meet the County's minimum application requirements.

If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact the County of Northern Lights Planning and Development Department via email at countyofnorthernlights@countyofnorthernlights.com; or via telephone at 780-836-3348.

3. **How much time does it take to get a decision on my development permit application?**

When an application is deemed complete, the Development Authority must make a decision on an application for development within 40 days from the date of receipt of the completed application pursuant to the *MGA*. The development permit comes into effect 14 days after its issuance. A development permit lapses and is automatically void if the development authorized is not commenced within 12 months from the date of issuing the permit or within such a longer period not exceeding 3 months as may be granted by the Development Authority.



For Further Information:

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Manning, Alberta T0H 2M0

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